



DEBATES OF THE SENATE

2nd SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 149 • NUMBER 57

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, May 7, 2014

The Honourable NOËL A. KINSELLA
Speaker

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Debates Services: D'Arcy McPherson, National Press Building, Room 906, Tel. 613-995-5756
Publications Centre: David Reeves, National Press Building, Room 926, Tel. 613-947-0609

Published by the Senate
Available on the Internet: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

THE SENATE

Wednesday, May 7, 2014

The Senate met at 1:30 p.m., the Speaker in the chair.

Prayers.

VISITOR IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the Governor General's Gallery of Ms. Yasmin Sooka, Executive Director of the Foundation for Human Rights in South Africa.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

SENATORS' STATEMENTS

THE HONOURABLE ROMÉO ANTONIUS DALLAIRE

2014 ELIE WIESEL AWARD RECIPIENT

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, I rise today to recognize our colleague Senator Dallaire, who was this year's recipient of the Elie Wiesel Award. This prize is the highest honour granted by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The prize is named after the 85-year-old Nobel Prize-winning author Elie Wiesel, who survived the Nazi death camps to write about his experience.

This high honour was given to our colleague last Wednesday. It was a tribute for his efforts to end the 1994 Rwandan genocide, and the work he has tirelessly done since then to prevent another similar devastation from happening. Senator Dallaire's role in Rwanda was one of heroic proportions. Where others would have given up and left, he stayed to protect those he could with what little resources he had. The international community failed him, but he did not want to fail the people of Rwanda. He saved many lives from death.

Senator Dallaire also works diligently to bring attention to the plight of child soldiers. He genuinely understands that children are our future and truly believes that every child is special. I was

able to witness this first-hand when I worked with him on the issues facing Darfur. He acts with a sense of purpose and has a heart filled with love for the children of the world.

The night the prize was given to Senator Dallaire, Samantha Power, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, spoke some powerful words about our colleague. I would like to share some of her words with you today:

You, General, have stood between the killers and their prey. You have heard the piercing screams of victims, and the deafening silence of a world unable to muster the will to act. You have turned that deadly silence into a personal — and now global — crusade to help summon meaningful action to protect peoples endangered by crimes of unfathomable and unconscionable proportions. In 1994, you were doing your job, at a time when no one else was willing to do theirs. Your story is a call to action, your commitment is an inspiration, and your courage is unmatched.

On behalf of all the honourable senators, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Senator Dallaire. Senators, I have travelled with Senator Dallaire to some of the most difficult parts of the world, and I have the greatest respect for him because of his belief that "all humans are human; no one human is more human than any other." That is why he works so hard for all the children of the world.

Honourable senators, I know I speak on behalf of all of us when I say this: Senator Dallaire, we are profoundly honoured to have you as one of our colleagues.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I wish to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Senator Antonio F. Trillanes IV, member of the Senate of the Philippines, 16th Congress. He is accompanied by Minister and Consul General Eric Gerardo E. Tamayo of the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa. They are the guests of the Honourable Senator Enverga.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I also wish to point out other guests of the Honourable Senator Enverga: Dr. Ken Ng, Chairman of the CIBC Taste of Asia Festival and Chairman of the Federation of Chinese Canadians in Markham;

and Mr. Mobeen Khaja, Co-Chair of the Taste of Asia Festival and President of the Association of Progressive Muslims of Ontario.

On behalf of all honourable senators, I welcome you to the Senate of Canada.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Hon. Tobias C. Enverga, Jr.: Honourable senators, I rise today to remind colleagues that May is Asian Heritage Month, so proclaimed by our government after this house passed the motion to recognize it as such. It is a month to celebrate the many contributions that Canadians of Asian heritage have made to our great country.

- (1340)

Much has been said about these contributions, most notably the efforts by Chinese labourers of the Canadian Pacific Railway, but today I wish to focus on the strong ties that Canada develops with Asian countries partly because of its large population with roots in Asia.

Honourable senators, recently the Honourable Chris Alexander, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, stated that 2013 showed record numbers of visitors from several Asian countries, including China and the Philippines, many visiting friends and family. The numbers of new permanent residents are still strong and there is continued growth of foreign students enrolling in Canadian universities.

Honourable senators, Canadians of Asian heritage are known to have acumen for civic organization. We see this through the many non-profit groups that promote cultural events, take part in the political process and do good charitable work.

Honourable senators, these positive contributions manifest themselves in different ways. One that is close to my heart is how the Canadian people responded to the calls for help from my country of birth, the Philippines, when disaster struck through Typhoon Haiyan, or Yolanda as it is named there. Our government's quick response included the Typhoon Haiyan Relief Fund. The promise was to match donations made by Canadians to registered charities, dollar for dollar. The total amount raised was \$85 million. Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced that this government will keep its promise and is funding several Canadian and international agencies helping with reconstruction and relief efforts.

Honourable senators, I have said before that never has our Senate had more members showing the diversity of our country. This diversity makes our institution stronger and promotes our ability to reach out to other legislatures through interparliamentary diplomacy.

I am happy to announce that in the galleries today is one of the founding members of the Philippines-Canada Parliamentary Friendship Group, Senator Antonio F. Trillanes IV, a former

naval officer and well known for his strong anti-corruption advocacy. The constitution of this group is a testament to our countries' increased cooperation. The \$105 million procurement of Bell helicopters by the Philippines is a sign of increased trade. The role Canada played in the conclusion of the peace agreement between the Philippines government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front is a sign of increased security cooperation.

Honourable senators, all of these milestones prove how our diversity can assist us in helping others and promote stronger relationships for mutual benefit, and make Canada a better place to live for us all.

SPEECH AND HEARING AWARENESS MONTH

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, each year the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists takes the month of May to help raise awareness and promote education on speech, language and hearing disorders in Canada. This year is a special year as it marks the fiftieth anniversary since its establishment in 1964.

The association has completely rebranded itself this year. Formerly known as the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists, the association is now known as Speech-Language & Audiology Canada, or SAC.

Although the rebranding is bringing many changes to the association, they are staying true to their original values and goals.

They have also become a founding partner of the International Communication Project 2014, a newly launched association as of last month. They, too, aim to highlight the importance of communication and how it is a vital part of our lives.

All recognize that many of us today take being able to speak and be heard for granted. That is why they choose to represent and support those who do not have the capability of always being heard.

Honourable senators, the goal is to highlight early detection of communication disorders. Through early detection, we can connect those in need with professionals that can help.

With more than 6,000 members from speech-language pathologists to audiologists to supportive personnel, they aim to help people speak well, hear well and, most importantly, live well.

Honourable senators, Speech-Language & Audiology Canada has recently partnered with the Canadian Academy of Audiology to assess the number of early hearing detection and intervention programs in the country. And the results are less than satisfactory. More than half of the provinces and territories have an insufficient number of programs available, so now they are working towards changing this through implementing more early hearing detection and intervention programs across the country.

Some of you will remember a press conference on Parliament Hill on March 25 this year where Speech-Language & Audiology Canada sought the help of the federal government's work with the provinces and territories in order to get more early hearing detection and intervention programs up and running.

I encourage you all to support those efforts.

Honourable senators, please join me in helping to spread the word that this May is Speech and Hearing Awareness Month. For example, you can use the hashtag #MAYMONTH on Twitter, but also please spread the word amongst your contacts and stakeholders that this is a cause truly worth supporting.

I would remind you that this evening at 5:30 in room 601/602, parliamentary restaurant, there will be a small reception to celebrate Speech and Hearing Awareness Month.

VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Hon. David M. Wells: Honourable senators, I rise today to congratulate the Subcommittee on Veteran Affairs on its acceptance of a work plan that will be used in the next year to study and to better understand the mental health issues affecting our veterans.

This study will look at the support that is currently available, as well as what more can be done to assist those who suffer from conditions such as operational stress injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder. It is our hope that this forward-looking study will be of assistance to those who are suffering with these conditions. We will also consider the effects on the families of our veterans.

Some time ago, my colleague Senator Plett, my predecessor on this committee, introduced the idea of undertaking a study on mental health in order to understand and further help all veterans affected by operational stress injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder. I'm happy to report that we are moving forward with the study. Thank you, Senator Plett.

The subcommittee will focus on new and emerging technologies, treatments and solutions to aid mental health conditions, such as PTSD, for members of the Canadian Forces and veterans. The subcommittee will also explore how those emerging technologies, treatments and solutions can be integrated into the benefit and services already provided by medical professionals working for the Department of National Defence and Veterans Affairs Canada. The committee intends to report to the Senate next spring.

Honourable senators, this issue is of paramount importance. Our government has been working diligently to provide our veterans and their families with the care and support they need. It is my hope that our committee will add additional value and bring to members of the Canadian Armed Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police the much-needed information that will aid in dealing with these medical conditions.

I believe this will also be beneficial for first responders and others who suffer from PTSD and operational stress injuries.

[Senator Mercer]

Honourable senators, our government is working hard to ensure that veterans are getting the care and benefits they need and deserve. As Canadians, we have an obligation to support the men and women who have served our country. I hope that this study will contribute to improving the quality of life for veterans. I look forward to working with my colleagues to make important recommendations and get essential information to our veterans and to all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Hon. Joseph A. Day: Honourable senators, every year, delegations of Canadian parliamentarians represent our country at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Since its creation, the assembly has provided a unique specialized forum for members of parliament from across the Atlantic Alliance to discuss and influence decisions on alliance security.

Through its work and activities, the assembly facilitates parliamentary awareness and understanding of the key issues affecting the security of the Euro-Atlantic area and supports national parliamentary oversight over defence and security. Participation in the assembly's activities helps to strengthen the transatlantic relationship and the values underpinning the alliance.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly gives countries with similar perspectives a valuable way to discuss and comment on world events.

• (1350)

Canadian contributions to this organization are greatly appreciated, as are the contributions of the parliamentarians who admirably represent their country. Senators Cordy, Andreychuk and Nolin deserve special mention for the leadership role they recently played at the international level.

Recently in Riga, Latvia, Senator Nolin stepped down as the assembly's treasurer, a position he had held for six years, the maximum term allowed under the assembly's rules. Many parliamentarians from NATO countries took advantage of the opportunity to sing Senator Nolin's praises, congratulate him and thank him for a job well done.

The assembly president, Hugh Bayley, noted that Senator Nolin had managed the assembly's budget during the worst global financial crisis in living memory. He pointed out that Senator Nolin had presented four consecutive budgets that had not even grown with inflation and said that he was impressed that Senator Nolin had delivered an effective cut in spending while maintaining the full spectrum of activities. Members were reminded that, starting in 2005, Senator Nolin had spearheaded a movement toward full political and financial transparency. Senator Nolin's successor said that it was an honour for him to follow Senator Nolin. To top it all off, I was told that Senator Nolin was given an unprecedented standing ovation.

I would like to commend Senator Nolin here today for the work that he did and thank him for the skill with which he represented Canada at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Thank you, senator.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

[English]

LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF COMMITTEE REPORT

Hon. Bob Runciman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Honourable senators, I rise today, pursuant to Appendix IV, page 135, paragraph (a) of the *Rules of the Senate*, to inform the Senate that the contents of a draft interim report of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs were leaked to the media prior to the report being deposited with the Clerk of the Senate on Tuesday, April 15, 2014, and the committee intends to commence an inquiry into the matter.

The committee's draft interim report on the subject matter of Bill C-23, the fair elections act, was adopted at an in-camera meeting on Thursday, April 10, 2014. Prior to our deliberations, all members of the committee were reminded of the confidentiality of both the draft report and of the in-camera discussions, and the committee took steps to ensure that all relevant documents were protected.

On Sunday, April 13, *The Globe and Mail* published an article online stating it had obtained information from "a source familiar with the report." At midnight that same day, *The Hill Times* published online that it had obtained a copy of the report and posted some details as well.

By the afternoon of Monday, April 14, contents of the draft report, including the fact that the committee had both adopted unanimous recommendations as well as appended a minority opinion, were reported by *The Canadian Press*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Hill Times*, as well as on CBC and CTV news programs, to name a few.

The report was not deposited with the Clerk until the morning of Tuesday, April 15.

As noted by our own Rules Committee in its April 2000 report:

. . . [it is] the pre-eminent right of the chamber to have reports tabled and made available first to its members prior to their being released to the general public, your Committee also notes that premature and unauthorized disclosure of committees reports can interfere with and impede the work of the committee. The violation of the confidentiality of *in camera* discussions undermines the confidence with which Senators can discuss things freely, and affects their ability to carry out the work on behalf of the Senate.

It is regrettable that, despite the committee's busy schedule and despite measures being put in place to protect our proceedings, the report was nonetheless leaked.

I want to assure honourable senators that the committee will examine the circumstances surrounding this incident, and I will report back the results of our inquiry to the Senate in due course.

SPINAL CORD INJURY CANADA

CHAIR-LEADER EVENT ON PARLIAMENT HILL

Hon. Jim Munson: I'm exhausted, honourable senators. I'm only exhausted because it is hard enough playing basketball standing up, but in a wheelchair it is really difficult. We had a game today.

Today is Chair-Leader Day on the Hill and, with my Conservative MP colleagues, Minister MacKay and a few others, we had a basketball game today. It is Chair-Leader Day and it is about recognizing Spinal Cord Injury Canada.

I was fortunate; I could leave my chair outside and walk in here. However, can you imagine that 365 days of the year 90,000 Canadians get up each morning and struggle to get into a chair and start their day?

It is very important that we recognize what those who are in chairs do every day. I don't want to make light of it, but today, I locked myself in a handicapped wheelchair access washroom. I almost impaled myself in a urinal by racing too fast to get there and struggled to get back up. That's not a very pretty sight. This is the second time this has happened. You would think I would know how to find the brakes.

I can tell you that getting around in a wheelchair can take on a huge significance. Spending a day in a wheelchair can be stressful and, at times, very humbling. Though it is far from a true-life experience, it does give you an appreciation for what the world looks like from the seat of a wheelchair and that it takes courage and determination to refuse to let the obstacles get you down and question yourself.

Right now, as I mentioned, close to 90,000 Canadians are living with spinal cord injuries.

Look at some of those Olympic athletes this year that we watched in Sochi — you have to be so proud of them.

We are all susceptible to circumstances, a traumatic accident or a disease, so it is truly a wonder how accessibility issues remain so prevalent in our communities.

I'm calling on all governments because governments do have to do more. We have to have a stronger commitment at all levels — for example, those involved in planning and building streets and

sidewalks. It also points to a need for advocacy and for us to focus on the abilities and to speak up for the rights of people in wheelchairs.

In closing, I support Spinal Cord Injury Canada because it helps people with spinal cord injuries achieve independence and self-reliance and has been doing so since 1945. Let's just pay more attention to spinal cord injury. Thank you.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

THE SENATE

DOCUMENT TABLED

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, with leave, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a letter dated May 7, 2014, addressed to the Speaker of the Senate from the Chief Government Whip and the Chief Opposition Whip.

Is leave granted?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COMMITTEE TO MEET DURING SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That, during the month of May 2014:

1. notwithstanding rule 12-18(1), the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry have the power to sit even though the Senate may then be sitting for the purposes of its study of Bill C-30, An Act to amend the Canada Grain Act and the Canada Transportation Act and to provide for other measures, should this bill be referred to the committee; and
2. pursuant to rule 12-18(2)(b)(i), the committee be also authorized to sit for the purposes of this study, even though the Senate may then be adjourned for more than a week.

[Senator Munson]

• (1400)

[Translation]

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Yonah Martin (Deputy Leader of The Government): Honourable senators, I give notice that, at the next sitting of the Senate, I will move:

That when the Senate next adjourns after the adoption of this motion, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday, May 13, 2014, at 2 p.m.

QUESTION PERIOD

TRANSPORT

MIRABEL AIRPORT—CLOSURE

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Mr. Leader of the Government in the Senate, I would like to raise an issue that you are familiar with and one that, I hope, is important to you. I am familiar with this issue from my time as a Liberal cabinet member many years ago. I am referring to the Mirabel Airport.

As you will recall, this project was to be a driver of economic development in Canada. It was to be modern, practical and ideally located to welcome increased traffic — and the sizeable Airbus A380 in particular. We also know the sad fate the project suffered at the hands of the Parti Québécois, which sabotaged it from day one because it gave Canada a vitally important role.

We must remember that Pearson Airport had not yet been constructed at that time. International traffic did not land in Toronto on a priority basis, and Mirabel was set to become the main international airport.

Last week, the President and Chief Executive Officer of Aéroports de Montréal, James C. Cherry, announced that Mirabel Airport would be demolished. The Mayor of Mirabel, Jean Bouchard, had this to say:

It makes no sense to tear down buildings that were built at the expense of human sacrifice. Hundreds of families had their land expropriated.

The Mayor of Montreal, Denis Coderre, recently stated that he wanted Aéroports de Montréal to take a step back so that Mirabel authorities could propose a different solution.

Furthermore, local elected officials and the business community want the terminal used to stimulate the economy of the Laurentian region, where economic activity is slow.

The Minister of Infrastructure and the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, Denis Lebel, made it known that for the time being, he was putting the issue on hold and letting the process take its course.

Mr. Leader, your government boasts about getting economic results for Canadians. The terminal is the federal government's property. Therefore, do the Conservative senators and members from Quebec plan to discuss this issue in caucus and maintain Mirabel Airport and the associated economic activity? Is this project something that my colleagues from Quebec care about?

Hon. Claude Carignan (Leader of the Government): Thank you for your question, senator. I want to make two clarifications. You said that the Laurentian region was struggling economically. You do not live in that region, but I live there and I want to remind you that it is one of the most economically vibrant regions in Canada, with one of the lowest unemployment rates in Quebec, and an area where there is a great deal of entrepreneurship. I don't know where you heard that the Laurentian region is struggling economically, especially the Basses-Laurentides.

As for your question about senators from Quebec, obviously, you would have to be a member of that caucus to know what goes on in our discussions. I can't answer the rest of your question about what Conservative senators are discussing specifically.

With respect to Mirabel Airport, as I have often said, it should have been called Trudeau Airport. From the outset, this airport project launched by your former Prime Minister was a fiasco in terms of the expropriations. As I mentioned last week, countless properties and farms were expropriated needlessly. The expropriated houses and farms were set on fire, and that was a horrible thing done by Mr. Trudeau's government. Unfortunately, Mirabel Airport continues to be in the news with the announcement of its closure by Aéroports de Montréal and the concentration of flights at Dorval.

Mirabel Airport, as you know, belongs to the Department of Transport, which leases it to Aéroports de Montréal, a non-profit corporation. Aéroports de Montréal operates at arm's length from the federal government, and it alone is responsible for the management, operation and development of the Montreal-Trudeau and Montreal-Mirabel international airports. As Minister Raitt stated, the work proposed for Mirabel Airport complies with the letter and the terms of the lease.

I believe that, yesterday, Mirabel Airport issued a press release outlining the tendering process for the demolition of the building and indicating that the contract will be awarded in September 2014.

Senator Hervieux-Payette: My secondary residence is in Sainte-Adèle. The economy there is not what it should be, and many people are on social assistance. If that is economic activity. . .

I have seen many institutions and many restaurants close, one after the other.

I will go back to my question. In 2010, the Aéroports de Montréal brochure stated:

Montréal-Mirabel International Airport is on track in its efforts to convert to an all-cargo and industrial airport. Many of the buildings, hangars and warehouses closed down in 2004 have found new uses.

Those were the words of the people who are currently proposing to tear down the facilities. I'm not sure whether somewhere along the way they stopped promoting the use of these facilities, but all I know is that in the past 10 years, I have never taken the same route twice to get to the airport in Dorval because the constant construction on the roads to the airport makes it absolutely impossible. It's become ridiculous. Developing countries generally have better access to their airports than we do in Montreal. I remember the battles and conversations with Cardinal Turcotte, who supported Dorval, and my priest in Sainte-Adèle, who supported Mirabel. This issue was not studied in terms of job creation, because the 15,000, 20,000 or 25,000 jobs that should have been created in Mirabel went to Toronto.

• (1410)

Development in Dorval is just incredible. People in the region will tell you that it is impossible to have a conversation because of the constant noise of airplanes flying overhead.

I don't blame the Conservative Party; I blame the Parti Québécois, which systematically failed to facilitate access to the airport even though everything was set up to do so. Getting to the Montreal airport — which was based on outdated concepts — is more complicated than ever.

Even though there is an independent administration, the economic development minister is still responsible for helping local authorities redefine the purpose of these facilities and participating in the development of the region. Even if that resulted in only 1,000 jobs, that would be significant.

Leader, is there someone somewhere who can at least try to make good use of what's left of this misadventure?

Like you, I deplore the poor use of the land. Not all of the planned development happened. What will your government do to help the people of that region — your region — develop this facility, which cost hundreds of millions of dollars?

Senator Carignan: Senator, as you know, part of the land is leased, and the runways in particular attracted several aerospace companies, including the Bombardier plant.

Major economic development is taking place on the expropriated lands that were not used by Mr. Trudeau and his government. However, with respect to the use of the terminal itself, Aéroports de Montréal operates at arm's length. It has a

mandate to manage, operate and develop the international airports, and it must make management decisions to optimize economic development and the development of that airport.

Again, much of the land managed by Aéroports de Montréal is leased by aerospace and other companies.

NATIONAL REVENUE

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY—SECURITY

Hon. Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis: Honourable senators, a few weeks ago, we learned that 900 Canadians had their personal information stolen from the Canada Revenue Agency system. Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate give us an update about the incident?

Hon. Claude Carignan (Leader of The Government): Senator, thank you for that excellent question concerning the global problem of the Heartbleed Bug. It is completely unacceptable that someone illegally hacked into the Canada Revenue Agency system.

The Privacy Commissioner was informed, and measures were taken to inform, support and protect those affected by the security breach. The RCMP is currently investigating.

The Government of Canada's lead security organizations, Shared Services Canada and the Chief Information Officer have all confirmed that the agency's services are now secure and safe.

As honourable senators know, the RCMP has made an arrest in this case. The investigation is ongoing, so it would be inappropriate for me to comment any further on this particular situation.

However, I would like to add that the Canada Revenue Agency has sent a registered letter to anyone whose information was compromised. This letter contains a 1-800 number to call for more information, including what to do to protect a social insurance number and how to access free credit protection services. We are also making sure that the Canada Revenue Agency accounts that were affected have added protection in order to avoid any unauthorized activity.

Senator Fortin-Duplessis: Mr. Leader, like many Canadians, I am concerned about the protection of personal information and the increasing number of digital attacks that can result in the serious problem of identity theft. As the Leader of the Government, could you tell this chamber what actions our government is taking to improve the security of Canadians' personal information, whether this information is held by the government or private companies?

Senator Carignan: Thank you, senator. The Canada Revenue Agency worked non-stop with Shared Services Canada to find a solution to make the system containing Canadians' personal information less vulnerable. We carefully tested the solution's effectiveness on the CRA's systems, which allowed us to restore online services.

[Senator Carignan]

We agree that any loss of Canadians' personal information is unacceptable, which is why we have taken action to strengthen protection of that information. Our government has put in place tough measures to protect Canadians' privacy and data security. These measures include in-depth training for officials, the Veterans Affairs Canada privacy action plan, the requirement to submit reports to the Privacy Commissioner and new guidelines to prevent privacy breaches.

I would also like to point out that our government introduced Bill S-4, the Digital Privacy Act, which is currently being studied in the Senate. This act will require organizations to notify Canadians if their personal information is lost or stolen, will impose fines of up to \$100,000 on companies that deliberately break the rules, will strictly limit the type of personal information that a company can disclose to another company, and will give the Privacy Commissioner of Canada more powers to enforce the law and hold offenders accountable for their actions.

The Interim Privacy Commissioner, Chantal Bernier, said that Bill S-4 contains:

... some very positive developments for the privacy rights of Canadians ...

We hope that all honourable senators will support this bill. Thank you again, Senator Fortin-Duplessis, for your question.

Senator Fortin-Duplessis: Thank you for your answer.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC—SECURITY CRISIS

Hon. Roméo Antoinius Dallaire: The government leader must really like answering questions from his friends. That must make his life easier. Congratulations, senator, for making our colleague's life a little easier. However, my job here is to ask the government leader for simple — not simplistic — answers.

We are currently witnessing catastrophes and conflicts in Africa, especially in the Central African Republic.

• (1420)

Can you give me a direct answer or get an answer from the Minister of Defence as to why Canada isn't sending troops to support the UN mission, which has called for the necessary reinforcements to ease the crisis on the ground?

Hon. Claude Carignan (Leader of the Government): As I said last week, Canada is deeply concerned about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic and about reports of people being targeted because of their religion.

Over the past two years, Canada has provided over \$23 million to help meet the widespread humanitarian need and \$5 million to support efforts by the African Union and France to restore security in the country. As you know, Canada contributes a

considerable amount of money to the UN peacekeeping budget and is supporting the efforts of the United Nations, France and the African Union in this crisis.

We will continue to closely monitor the situation in the Central African Republic, and we remain concerned about what is happening on the ground.

Senator Dallaire: I appreciate that Canada contributes money, but the money we contribute meets about 3 per cent of the needs. This does not reflect the fact that we are one of the 11 most powerful countries in the world.

My question is why is Canada refusing to put boots on the ground to stop the massacres?

Senator Carignan: As you know, there are human beings wearing those boots. Canada has a responsibility to carefully weigh its options with its allies and to make decisions in the interest of all Canadians.

We will continue to provide humanitarian and development assistance to the Central African Republic in order to address the growing humanitarian crisis in that country.

Senator Dallaire: I would like to read an excerpt from a report I obtained.

[*English*]

The Rwandans, who are part of the UN force already deployed, have shot militiamen who have threatened civilians and caused destruction and torture. However, French forces have stood by while these people have been butchered.

There's already a problem of having a former colonial power inside a colony and, in particular, where that former colonial power is not using its maximum capabilities to meet the rules of engagement and the mandate.

We have the language; we have the knowledge; we have the equipment; we have the training; and we have the experience. We have everything that is required to be the backbone of a significant UN force that can intervene and stop the massacres going on between those two religious groups. We have all of this available — you know it, I know it — and it's sitting there on our bases across this country.

Why do you refuse to answer my question of why we are not deploying boots on the ground to reinforce a UN mission that has asked for us to become the backbone of that mission?

[*Translation*]

Senator Carignan: We will continue to support efforts by the African Union and France to restore security in that country. We will continue to contribute a considerable amount of money to the UN peacekeeping budget. We will continue to support the efforts of the United Nations, France and the African Union in this crisis.

As I mentioned, when you speak of boots on the ground, I realize that you are talking about the humans who wear those boots. We have the responsibility to carefully study all our options, including the one you raised, with our allies, and to make decisions that are in the interests of all Canadians.

We will continue to provide humanitarian and development assistance to the Central African Republic.

Senator Dallaire: Twenty years ago, at about this same time, the Canadian government's response was that Rwanda was the country where, proportionally, Canada had contributed the most humanitarian and international development assistance. That is along the same lines as what the leader of the government is trying to tell us about our contribution in the Central African Republic.

Second, the answer was as follows:

[*English*]

The response was that we are studying the situation in order to ensure that, in fact, Canada's interests are being met by the possibility of deploying forces in Rwanda. Ultimately, at least they sent me a dozen to help me build my headquarters.

Your words today are the spitting image of the words of the government at that time. We are 20 years later. We have a responsibility to protect. We have the International Criminal Court. We have all kinds of assets that we didn't even have then, that you're so proud of having built and bought for us to be able to deploy, yet you still refuse to give me an answer as to why we do not deploy forces to the United Nations in the midst of a growing catastrophe that will turn into a genocide. Why?

[*Translation*]

Senator Carignan: As I said, we will continue to work with our allies, France and the United Nations, to ensure that efforts are made to prevent or mitigate the impact of these events. We will provide as much support as possible, by examining with our allies all options available to us, and we will continue to make decisions that are in the interests of all Canadians.

[*English*]

Senator Dallaire: On May 9 you will make a big affair, to which I have not been invited, to recognize the service of military and families and civilians who deployed for nearly a decade in Afghanistan. I have never seen so many Canadian flags all over the damn place. You would think that Sheila Copps had come back!

You will deploy all kinds of equipment. The Prime Minister will get his photo shoots with troops behind him, acting as if he is the head of state when he is not, and using troops for that event.

Then, of course, there will be an appropriate ceremony where the troops will recognize that on Parliament Hill we have taken into account what has happened. I know a lot of troops will be thankful for that.

But those troops also know — and their commanders, their generals and the staff know — that historically, where a situation is festering right now in Africa and in other places, we have

deployed. We had less capability then than we have now. They know on the one hand, yes, we have served and we have done our duty, but because the Central African Republic is of no interest to us, those human beings don't count. It's not worth the sacrifice or the cash, so we will stay home and watch another catastrophic failure when we could be the primary instrument to assist the UN in preventing that thing from going fully catastrophic.

Why does the government refuse to use the assets it has in order to curtail the massive destruction of human beings in that country?

[*Translation*]

Senator Carignan: I would like to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by your question to talk about the National Day of Honour. As you know, more than 40,000 Canadian soldiers, men and women, who served in Afghanistan and make Canadians proud, will participate in this event.

• (1430)

This Friday, May 9, the National Day of Honour will be marked in Ottawa and across Canada with a number of events, including a parade on Parliament Hill, a moment of silence and the Soldier On Afghanistan Relay. Preparations are well under way, but our priority is to ensure that the families of fallen soldiers are all invited and given a place of honour. We want to honour those who, as you say, wore the boots and never came back.

We encourage all Canadians to participate in the commemoration activities across the country, including those held in their communities.

Senator Dallaire: You forgot to invite us. I don't have a problem with recognition. The Speaker of the House took the opportunity to recognize the 11 officers who came and helped me at my headquarters in 1994, one of whom committed suicide. The Senate also recognized them.

You are recognizing Afghanistan. Before that, there was a whole host of missions that were not recognized. While we were in Afghanistan, we had troops in the Congo, Myanmar and the Middle East.

I commend you for recognizing Afghanistan, but the government also needs to look at what can be done with such resources.

If we want to inspire these troops and their families to continue to make sacrifices and if we want to recognize those who paid the price, we cannot just recognize those who suit us. We also need to look at our fundamental values related to human rights. If we have the ability to react and respond, we need to do so and not be afraid of using those troops.

Why is the government refusing to send troops into the Central African Republic?

[Senator Dallaire]

Senator Carignan: I think it is important to correct one aspect of your comment. First, we wanted to give priority to the families of fallen soldiers, who will be more intimately involved in the ceremonies.

As for the ceremony that will take place here in the chamber, your leader and I were invited. Senator Cowan agreed to participate and represent the Senate. Senator Kinsella will also be there to honourably represent the senators. That way, there will be as many spaces as possible for family members of fallen soldiers.

[*English*]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

LINCOLN ALEXANDER DAY BILL

THIRD READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Meredith, seconded by the Honourable Senator Raine, for the third reading of Bill S-213, An Act respecting Lincoln Alexander Day, as amended.

Hon. Marjory LeBreton: Honourable senators, I did not want to let the opportunity pass without saying a few words about the Honourable Lincoln Alexander and Bill S-213. While he would be honoured that this bill is before us, I am sure in his own humble way he would downplay the notion that a day be specifically named for him.

Honourable senators, I first met Lincoln Alexander in 1965. He carried the Conservative banner in Hamilton West in the November 1965 general election. John Diefenbaker's Bill of Rights attracted him to the Conservative Party. Mr. Diefenbaker's record of human rights in Canada and around the world hit home with Lincoln Alexander.

Mr. Diefenbaker so admired Lincoln Alexander and campaigned hard for him in that election. Canada's first woman cabinet minister, Ellen Fairclough, was also one of Lincoln Alexander's big supporters. While he did not meet success in the 1965 election, he had the best result of any Conservative candidate in Hamilton.

On November 8, I sat with Mr. Diefenbaker's entourage in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, listening to the election results. The news that Linc did not make it disappointed Mr. Diefenbaker immensely.

Honourable senators, Lincoln Alexander's hard work between 1965 and 1968 paid off, and he was elected in the June 1968 general election.

Honourable senators, this is a significant election, I know, for most people in this chamber, particularly those on the other side. This was 1968, the year of the so-called Trudeaumania election. Lincoln Alexander, even with all of the hype that was going on and against great odds, was elected in Hamilton.

If you will recall the time, Martin Luther King had been assassinated. Robert Kennedy had been assassinated just months before that election. There was civil and racial strife going on south of the border, among our neighbours to the south, and Lincoln Alexander was elected as the first Black member of Parliament in Canada.

I think I have actually relayed this story, but because he was the first Black member of Parliament, he became a *cause célèbre*, so to speak, especially with the American networks ABC, NBC and CBS. If memory serves me — I may be wrong, but I don't think so — not one single member in either the House of Representatives or the United States Senate was Black. Lincoln Alexander, being Black, created a lot of interest for our neighbours to the south.

He therefore had a lot of media interest and people calling him and asking him about this breakthrough election. One of them asked him the question, "What is the percentage of Blacks in your riding?" He said, "Oh, 20." They said, "Twenty per cent?" He said, "No, 20 families." Such is the tribute to Lincoln Alexander.

Lincoln Alexander loved Hamilton and its citizens, especially hard-working blue-collar workers, the salt of the earth. As my colleague Don Plett and I would know, "the salt of the earth" is how he described them. He got it.

He valued all of his fellow citizens. He was driven by service to the community, not by ideology. The citizens of Hamilton repaid him by re-electing him in 1972, 1974, 1979 and 1980.

Honourable senators, let the record show that he ran and was elected as a Conservative, Canada's first Black member of Parliament. He was named to the cabinet by a Progressive Conservative prime minister to be the first Black member ever to serve in cabinet.

He left Parliament to take up the position of the chair of the Ontario Workers' Compensation Board. Again, he was the first Black appointed by a Conservative premier, Bill Davis and the Conservative government in Ontario.

In 1985, he was recommended to Her Majesty as Canada's first Black viceregal representative by Conservative Prime Minister the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, a position he held from 1985 to 1991.

The Honourable Lincoln Alexander put three goals at the centre of his mandate as Lieutenant Governor of Ontario: advancing the cause of youth, fighting racism, advocating on behalf of seniors and raising awareness of the plight of the mentally ill.

He loved being Lieutenant Governor, because he loved interacting with all people, whether they were royalty or just plain common folk, as he used to say.

During his tenure, Lincoln Alexander welcomed 290 dignitaries, received 78,283 guests, visited 704 communities, held 715 receptions, visited 2,235 schools, shook 240,000 hands, signed 60,000 orders-in-council and cabinet documents and gave Royal Assent to 550 bills. He was a busy man.

He was a proud Conservative. He had friends and admirers from all parties. He admired Jean Chrétien, and he had many friends on the Liberal side, as I'm sure Senator Eggleton will attest to when he speaks to the bill. Prime Minister Chrétien appointed him as Chair of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation in 2000, an inspired choice.

• (1440)

Honourable colleagues, I have many personal and fine memories of "Linc," as we called him. When he left Parliament in the spring of 1980, after we were returned to opposition, there was a huge reception attended by all — Conservatives, Liberals and NDP — in Room 200 of the West Block. Ed Broadbent brought the house down with a true story of a parliamentary delegation to Washington that he and Linc were part of. It was a hilarious story that highlighted Lincoln Alexander's tremendous sense of humour. Senator Eggleton and I talked about this. In this age of social media, Twitter and political correctness, I will not repeat it on the record, but I will tell you privately if you ask. It is a very funny and true story.

Another memory was during the 2008 federal election. I was on the Prime Minister's tour, and we were in the Niagara region. My cell phone rang. It was Lincoln Alexander. He knew we were in the area and he wanted to pass a message on to Prime Minister Harper. I said, "Linc, you will not believe where I am." He replied, "I know where you are; you're travelling with the Prime Minister." I responded, "Yes, but at this very moment, we are driving along the Lincoln M. Alexander Parkway." He laughed and told me this is a particularly interesting honour, especially because, while he had occasion to be driven on the parkway, he'd never gotten his driver's licence, did not drive and, therefore, never had the pleasure of driving on his own roadway. We had a good laugh about that. That is an example of his down-to-earth sense of humour.

This towering gentleman, physically and philosophically, supported throughout his career by his elegant wife Yvonne, truly made his mark on all Canadians, most particularly on the citizens of Ontario. This bill, honourable senators, is yet another acknowledgment of that fact.

Thank you.

Hon. Art Eggleton: I intend to speak on this tomorrow.

(On motion of Senator Eggleton, debate adjourned.)

[Translation]

**DISABILITY TAX CREDIT PROMOTERS
RESTRICTIONS BILL**

THIRD READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Buth, seconded by the Honourable Senator Doyle, for the third reading of Bill C-462, An Act restricting the fees charged by promoters of the disability tax credit and making consequential amendments to the Tax Court of Canada Act.

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: Honourable senators, I would like to say a few words before moving a small, but very important amendment to show our respect for people working in the health care sector in particular, such as doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists and all those who have to take part in the process at some point to help disabled persons get a tax credit and have access to benefits they otherwise wouldn't get.

Health care professionals have to sign a form, and the definitions in Bill C-462 talk about promoters. I think that health care professionals feel mistreated, if not insulted, when they are categorized as promoters. No doctor would promote signing a document that provides access to a tax benefit. That is absolutely ridiculous.

MOTION IN AMENDMENT

Hon. Céline Hervieux-Payette: I am moving a small amendment to a private member's bill. It seems that an error may have inadvertently been made.

Accordingly, I move that Bill C-462 be not now read a third time, but that it be amended in clause 2, on page 2, by replacing line 14 with the following:

“a disability tax credit request, but does not include a person who is a member in good standing of a professional association established by or under an Act of the legislature of a province and entitled to provide health care in the province.”

As I explained, this concerns all health professionals, who are regulated in their practice by the provinces. They are not promoters within the meaning of this bill, and I think that honourable senators should exclude them from this bill so as not to confuse them with promoters, who charge money — often an incredible amount of money — for access to these benefits.

Hon. Leo Housakos (The Hon. the Acting Speaker): Honourable senators, will there be debate?

[English]

Hon. Art Eggleton: I will speak to both the amendment and the main motion tomorrow.

(On motion of Senator Eggleton, debate adjourned.)

BLACK APRIL DAY BILL

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Ngo, seconded by the Honourable Senator Ogilvie, for the second reading of Bill S-219, An Act respecting a national day of commemoration of the exodus of Vietnamese refugees and their acceptance in Canada after the fall of Saigon and the end of the Vietnam War.

Hon. Mobina S. B. Jaffer: Honourable senators, I rise to speak about Bill S-219, the Black April Day act. I would like to thank Senator Ngo for tabling this bill. I'm certain there are many in the Vietnamese community who would like to thank him, as well, so thank you, Senator Ngo.

For the Vietnamese communities around the world, Black April Day is one of the most significant days of their collective history. It recognizes the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975, the takeover of South Vietnam by the North, and the beginning of the mass exodus of millions of Vietnamese people from their beloved homeland.

During this exodus, many Vietnamese were forced to leave their homeland, and by any means necessary. Sadly, this meant the use of overcrowded, poorly constructed boats.

At the time, approximately 840,000 Vietnamese who fled became known as “Vietnamese boat people” because of their use of those dangerous boats. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has reported that at least 215,000 people lost their lives at sea in the desperate attempt to flee Vietnam. Many died by drowning, illness and starvation. In other cases, boats were hijacked by pirates, their passengers kidnapped and sold into slavery.

Senator Ngo has stated several stories about the suffering of the Vietnamese boat people. I would like to tell you one that really struck me. It is the story of a girl named Thuy Trang Lai. She writes:

I was 11 years old when I fled my homeland in a frenetic whirlwind of madness, confusion, and fear. What I recall most vividly was a sudden devastating realisation that my mother wasn't coming with me.

She stayed to look after the rest of the family. She could afford only to send one of her children out of the country, and I was the eldest. But no one had told me any of this — I had no idea I was leaving. It wasn't until the moment when my seventeen-year-old cousin grabbed me by the hand and the two of us ran off that I had any inkling my life was about to change. It was a moment that has me in tears even to this day.

I have tried to block out the horrors of that boat trip during the first terrible seventy-two hours. The South China Sea is merciless at the best of times, and it was as though our boat would be swallowed at any moment. I clutched at my stomach to keep the vomit down. I held desperately onto my knees and shut my eyes tight to stop myself from thinking too much about my mother.

But there was one thing I couldn't block out. A dream, a particular dream. How I cried when I awoke from it! It was the hard damp timber I had been sleeping on that woke me. Then I would feel the tears pour from my eyes, down my cheeks and into the hands that desperately craved to reach out to my mother. In the dream I was drinking lemonade Mum would make at home and, as always, she was there beside me.

It felt so real, and it was so beautiful that it turned into a real nightmare when I woke. In that sad moment I remembered how her arms would reach out for me whenever I needed her, and I cried until I ached.

The boat cut a sad figure on the furious sea. The half-broken vessel carried the weight of hundreds of people and their heavy hearts. We had to sit on top of each other, and couldn't even see our own arms and legs. Babies who resembled rag dolls howled day and night as people twenty years older than I was cried for their mothers too.

I was constantly shivering from being drenched in seawater, but at least it washed other people's vomit off me.

As the days passed, the boat began to stink of desperation. All around me were the hungry bodies and haunted faces of people deteriorating before my eleven-year-old eyes. The cramped conditions make it hard for us to move even an inch, so we often sat in the same position for days on end. It was as if Death visited me more times than I could count on one shivering hand.

• (1450)

Honourable senators, to be a refugee is one of the most difficult trials a person can face. There is an overwhelming helplessness that you feel when you are in the hands of the goodwill of the international community. I thank Canada and the policies of Prime Minister Trudeau which allowed my family and me to find a home here in Canada in 1975.

It was around that time when Senator Ngo also arrived in Canada as a refugee.

Those of us who have been refugees share an unspoken bond. We are acutely aware of the varying levels of suffering that each refugee undergoes. Some of us, through sheer chance, were put in a position where a country welcomed us with open arms, such as Canada. We are the lucky ones. Others were forced to spend their time in refugee camps or roam from one country to the next hoping that they would be accepted or, at the very least, allowed to remain in humane conditions.

For those of us, like Senator Ngo and myself, who were fortunate enough to have a country such as Canada accept us, we know that it could have very well been us on that boat or in a refugee camp. We could still be in a refugee camp.

It is because of this understanding that Senator Ngo, you senators and I work hard to raise the awareness of the plight of refugees around the world.

Recognizing April 30 as Black April Day is a recognition of Canada's acceptance of 137,000 Vietnamese refugees between 1976 and 1991.

In particular, it is recognition of the Canadian families, religious groups, charitable groups and the non-governmental organizations that sponsored an estimated 34,000 Vietnamese refugees to come to Canada. It is also an acknowledgment of the suffering that many Vietnamese refugees, like the 11-year-old Thuy Trang Lai, underwent during their exodus or a boat ordeal.

Honourable senators, Bill S-219 is an important bill, not only for the Vietnamese community in Canada, but for anyone who has suffered the loss of one's beloved homeland and had to endure the status of refugee. It is for this reason that I would urge honourable senators to speak in favour of Bill S-219 and eventually vote for it.

(On motion of Senator Martin, debate adjourned.)

THE SENATE

MOTION TO CALL UPON MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TO INVITE THE AUDITOR GENERAL TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE AUDIT OF EXPENSES—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Downe, seconded by the Honourable Senator Chaput:

That the Senate call upon the Members of the House of Commons of the Parliament of Canada to join the Senate in its efforts to increase transparency by acknowledging the longstanding request of current and former Auditors General of Canada to examine the accounts of both Houses of Parliament, and thereby inviting the Auditor General of Canada to conduct a comprehensive audit of House of Commons expenses, including Members' expenses, and

That the audits of the House of Commons and the Senate be conducted concurrently, and the results for both Chambers of Parliament be published at the same time.

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, the motion by my colleague Senator Downe to call upon the House of Commons to follow our lead and invite the Auditor General to perform a comprehensive audit of that house's expenses is a no-brainer. I'm therefore pleased to add my support for this motion and I encourage you all to do the same.

Senator Day: Is that because it is a no-brainer?

Senator Mercer: That's true. I'm trying to make it simple for everybody around here. I want everybody to pay attention.

Senator Segal: That tips the scales.

Senator Mercer: I found a rather appropriate quote to share with you from the Dalai Lama:

A lack of transparency results in distrust and a deep sense of insecurity.

How very true.

Honourable senators, we do indeed live in difficult times here in the Parliament of Canada. Public mistrust of this institution is at an all-time high. Even if we here believe that public service is one of the most honourable things one can do for their country, the public increasingly does not see the value in it. That concerns me and should concern everyone else here.

If we are doing things to improve our system of governance, why shouldn't the other place? Why is it only the Senate and its senators that are acting in the best interests of Canadians? A better question is: How can we all regain the trust of Canadians?

I believe we have already started to do that right here in the Senate of Canada. We have opened our doors to the Auditor General to clear the air, to examine the books, but, most importantly, to help us improve the processes that govern us — not an easy task for sure.

Honourable senators, there's a great deal to be said for a thorough examination of Parliament's spending practices. Given Parliament's role in overseeing the expenditures of the government, it only seems fair that its own spending and that of its members be subject to scrutiny.

We voted to bring in the Auditor General. So, too, should honourable senators vote to pass this motion encouraging the members of the other place to do the same. I'm not saying that we should force the other place to do anything, but that doesn't mean we can't encourage the other place to act in the best interests of Canadians.

If we are going to do this, let's do it right. If we are asking for a comprehensive audit of one house of Parliament that spent \$105 million last year, there is no good reason not to look at the

other house that spent \$493 million last year. It is not just a matter of fairness; it is simple math.

If those who belittle this chamber and call it a waste of taxpayers' money are serious about value for money, let them prove their high regard for the taxpayers of this country by showing how they spend their share of the money in the other place. It is simply a case of putting your money where your mouth is.

Quite frankly, honourable senators, it is a bit much to be accused of being unaccountable by members of the other place when their Internal Economy Committee, unlike ours, meets only in camera and still refuses to take the steps we have already taken here to demonstrate our transparency. Selective transparency is not transparency at all.

If Canadians are to have full confidence in their Parliament, they deserve to see how all of it operates.

- (1500)

Honourable senators, there is no good reason to examine one house and not the other — no good reason at all. It is only right that the House of Commons brings in the Auditor General to look at its books. As a past Auditor General said, "I think Parliament's auditor should audit Parliament."

Honourable senators, I suspect there may be little enthusiasm by my Conservative colleagues to urge their colleagues in the other place to do as we have done. However, I will remind those senators across the way that it is part of their legacy to bring in more accountability and transparency. The time for accountability has arrived. Does anyone remember that? I am sure that those on the other side will remember the document, *Stand Up for Canada: Conservative Party of Canada Federal Election Platform 2006*. Allow me to read the first sentence.

Senator Segal: You cannot live in the past.

Senator Mercer: The first sentence reads, "The time for accountability has arrived" followed by a note signed by the Leader of the Conservative Party, Stephen Harper. The time for accountability has arrived. That is the first line in the platform. The time for accountability indeed has arrived, honourable senators.

In the spirit of non-partisanship, I will not review entirely the surprising lack of transparency with respect to that provided by the current government over the years. Why is the government not standing up for the rule of law in Canada? Why is the government not standing up for the Charter of Rights and Freedoms? Why is the government not standing up for the institutions of Parliament, like the Supreme Court? Why is the government not standing up for all Canadians?

Honourable senators, might I offer a bit of political advice for our colleagues across the way? It seems some of your colleagues in the other place may be supportive of this motion — so hope is not completely lost. It also appears that the NDP, who were dead against this, seem to be inching their way closer to supporting the idea.

Ask yourselves why, honourable senators. The NDP appear not to want the Auditor General to come into the other place. You will recall that the NDP were ordered to shut down their satellite offices last month as they were deemed not allowed under the rules of the House of Commons. About \$3 million may have been spent on such offices; and it is becoming clear that they may have to pay that money back.

Some Hon. Senators: Shame!

Senator Mercer: Ask yourselves this: What else may be hiding in the House of Commons?

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, Oh!

Senator Mercer: Honourable senators, if we want to encourage more transparency and accountability by all of Parliament — and I emphasize all of Parliament — then I urge you to support this motion. I ask you to stand up for Canada now and vote in favour of this motion.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!

(On motion of Senator Marshall, debate adjourned.)

(The Senate adjourned until Thursday, May 8, 2014, at 1:30 p.m.)

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